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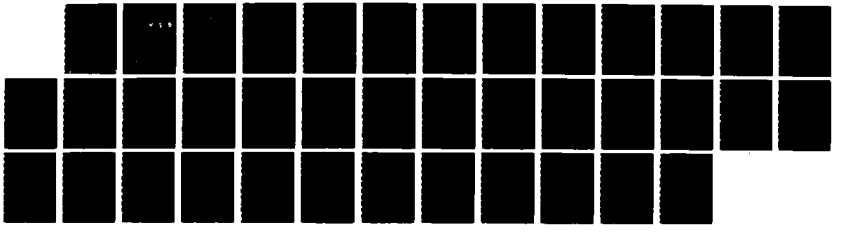

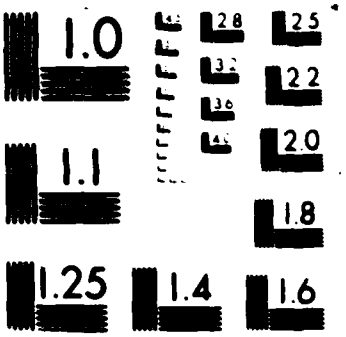
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AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

STUDENT REPORT

FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT OF THE WING-LEVEL LOGISTICS PLANS DIVISION IN THE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

MAJOR ANN E. SCHMOYER, USAF 87-2250

"insights into tomorrow"

REPORT NUMBER 87-2250

TITLE FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT OF THE WING-LEVEL LOGISTICS PLANS DIVISION IN THE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

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Submitted to the faculty in partial fulfillment of requirements for graduation.

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This study defines the current functional alignment and responsibilities of a Strategic Air Command (SAC) wing-level logistics plans (LGX) division and discusses the advantages/disadvantages of the current functional alignment. The study then proposes a functional realignment of the LGX division from deputy commander for resource management supervision to wing commander supervision. The advantages/disadvantages of the proposed realignment are also discussed. Four issues affecting the functional alignment are analyzed. These issues are span of control, communications flow, chain of command, and career progression.

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PREFACE

What's to be gained, or lost, if the Strategic Air Command (SAC) functionally realigned its wing-level logistics plans (LGX) divisions by moving them directly under the wing commanders? (19:--) That's the question addressed in this study.

This question, the subject of numerous debates among SAC logistics planners for many years, surfaced approximately one year after Headquarters (HQ) SAC transferred the LGX division from deputy commander for maintenance (DCM) supervision to deputy commander for resource management (DCR) supervision. HQ SAC sponsored this study to obtain an analysis of the key issues relevant to this question as well to obtain recommendations to assist them in future discussions concerning the functional alignment of SAC wing-level LGX divisions.

To answer the sponsor's question, the author provides a brief introductory chapter and then provides a look at how SAC wing-level logistics plans divisions are functionally aligned today (Chapter Two) before reviewing a possible functional realignment (Chapter Three).

The heart of the research is pulled together in Chapter Four as the author examines four issues which affect the functional alignment of wing-level logistics plans divisions. These issues are: span of control, communications flow, chain of command, and career progression.

Finally, the study ends with a summary chapter which reviews the key points of Chapters Two, Three, and Four. This final chapter explains how the findings affect the functional alignment of SAC wing-level logistics plans divisions.

No project is ever complete without acknowledgements by the author, and so it is with this study. The author expresses appreciation to the sponsor, Master Sergeant Charles F. Beck, USAF (HQ SAC/LGLM), for suggesting this topic; to the project advisor, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Stewart, USAF (ACSC/EDM), for invaluable assistance and inspiration; to Mr Andy Beaulieu (PACOPS/LGXW), for volunteering his thoughts on the question this study addresses; and to a former boss, Colonel David S. Corzilius, USAF (Ret) for his insight and assistance with this project.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Major Ann E. Schmoyer is a 1975 distinguished graduate of the US Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. She graduated from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business and Economics in 1975 and received her commission at the same time. Her first duty station was George Air Force Base (AFB), California (1975-1978), where she held various positions with the 35th Supply Squadron and the Wing Maintenance Production Control Unit. She transferred to the 2187th Communications Group at Aviano Air Base, Italy, where she served as the Materiel Control Officer from 1978 to 1980.

Returning to the United States in 1980, Major Schmoyer graduated from the Squadron Officer School at Maxwell AFB, Alabama (Class 80-B), and cross-trained into the logistics plans career field. She was assigned to the 416th Bombardment (Heavy) Wing at Griffiss AFB, New York, from 1980 to 1983 where she was the Chief, Logistics Plans Division. During this assignment, she was named the Eighth Air Force Outstanding Logistics Plans Officer for 1981 and her division was named the Eighth Air Force Outstanding Logistics Plans Division for 1982.

She transferred to Headquarters, Pacific Air Forces (HQ PACAF) at Hickam AFB, Hawaii, in 1983 and was initially assigned as a Logistics Staff Officer in the Logistics Programs Division. From 1985 to 1986, she served as the Executive Officer to the HQ PACAF Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics.

Major Schmoyer earned a Masters Degree in Systems Management from the State University of New York at Binghamton in 1983. She is a graduate of the US Air Force Supply Operations Officer Course as well as the US Air Force Logistics Plans and Programs Officer Course, both at Lowry AFB, Colorado. She completed Squadron Officer School (SOS) by correspondence prior to attending the SOS resident program and she also completed the Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) correspondence course. Major Schmoyer is a member of the resident ACSC Class of 1987.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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"insights into tomorrow"

REPORT NUMBER 87-2250

AUTHOR(S) MAJOR ANN E. SCHMOYER, USAF

TITLE FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT OF THE WING-LEVEL LOGISTICS PLANS DIVISION IN THE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

I. Purpose: In 1975 the US Air Force approved the tri-deputate organizational structure for its wings. This structure took some of the logistics functions from the director of logistics, all logistics functions as well as the comptroller function from the base commander, and gave them to the newly created deputy commander for resource management (DCR). In the process, the director of logistics' title was changed to deputy commander for maintenance (DCM). Although the Strategic Air Command (SAC) implemented the tri-deputate system, the DCM maintained responsibility for the logistics plans (LGX) division rather than transferring it to the DCR. Headquarters SAC eventually transferred the LGX division from the DCM to the DCR (1980), but approximately one year later some LGX personnel began to question the realignment. The debate centered around one question: Should LGX remain under DCR supervision or be functionally realigned directly under the wing commander (CC)?

II. Objectives: The objectives of this study are twofold. The first objective is to define the current functional alignment and responsibilities of a SAC wing logistics plans division using a SAC air refueling/bombardment wing as an example. This objective provides the reader with an overview of the major responsibilities of an LGX division (administration, plans, programs, and mobility) as well as an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of the current functional alignment. The second objective is to develop a

proposed functional realignment of LGX from DCR to CC control, review the major responsibilities of the realigned division, and then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed realignment. The bottom line is to answer the question: Would capabilities of wing-level logistics plans divisions in the Strategic Air Command be enhanced if the divisions were functionally realigned under wing commanders?

III. Discussion of Analysis: Four issues which affect the functional alignment of any division are discussed in detail in Chapter Four. These issues are span of control, communications flow, chain of command, and career progression. Span of control is closely tied to the principle of departmentation (a logical grouping of tasks or people) as well as the communications flow. Communications is a two-way street; it needs to go up as well as down, but in order for it to effectively go up, a subordinate must have access to his/her boss for discussion, assistance in problem solving, etc. Lastly, career progression is tied to realistic career counseling by a senior individual in the career area, and to a logical career growth structure.

IV. Findings: There is no magic number of subordinates one individual can effectively manage, i.e., there is no consensus on a limit. This issue in and of itself is not a determining factor in the functional alignment of a division. However, since span of control is tied to departmentation (the US Air Force uses this principle), the proposed functional realignment breaks the logical grouping of tasks and would not enhance the LGX division's capabilities. Communications flow will actually be more difficult for a realigned division because the division moves to a supervisor who has more subordinates, and therefore less available time, than the current supervisor. A chain of command problem currently exists in the mobility area due to a conflict in regulations. AFR 400-25 (1984) states mobility (an LGX responsibility) is under the DCR's jurisdiction, but AFR 28-4 (1978) states the installation mobility officer works directly for the wing commander. If the DCR is bypassed because of a functional realignment, the LGX division's capabilities will be weakened since they lose the DCR's experience and assistance. As far as career progression is concerned, LGX gains nothing from a realignment. There is no logical progression from LGX to CC, but there is a possibility of an LGX officer becoming a DCR. The LGX officer looks to the senior logistician (the DCR) for advice and career counseling; he/she will have to continue to look to the DCR, even if he/she works for the wing commander, because the typical wing commander lacks a logistics background.

CONTINUED

V. Conclusions. The four major responsibilities of a SAC wing logistics plans division will be the same regardless of where the division is functionally aligned. Additionally, none of the four issues affecting a functional alignment will work to the advantage of a functionally realigned division; in fact, some would have a negative effect. Therefore, the author concludes: The capabilities of wing-level logistics plans divisions in SAC would not be enhanced if the divisions were functionally realigned under wing commanders.

VI. Recommendations. The author offers two recommendations. First, do not change the functional alignment of SAC's logistics plans divisions. Second, eliminate the dichotomy faced by the installation mobility officer -- update AFR 28-4 and include the DCR in the mobility chain of command.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Personnel assigned to the logistics mobility division (LGLM) at Headquarters, Strategic Air Command (HQ SAC) requested an Air Command and Staff College student research a rather controversial topic. This topic, the subject of numerous debates for several years, is: Would capabilities of wing-level logistics plans (LGX) divisions in the Strategic Air Command be enhanced if the LGX divisions were functionally realigned under wing commanders? (23:6)

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

In 1972 the United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) tested a wing tri-deputate system by relieving the director of logistics (LG) of responsibility for two logistics functions (supply [LGS] and logistics plans [LGX]), leaving him with munitions and aircraft maintenance functions. This test also relieved the base commander of responsibility for logistics functions under his control (procurement [LGP] which was later renamed contracting [LGC], and transportation [LGT]), and for the comptroller (AC) function. The result was the creation of a third deputate -- the deputy commander for resource management (DCR, also known as RM), who assumed responsibility for the transferred logistics and comptroller functions. In the process, the LG was given a new title: deputy commander for maintenance (DCM, also known as MA), thus elevating to deputate level the important munitions and aircraft maintenance functions. Additionally, the base commander became known as the combat support group commander (CSG). The DCR and the DCM are two of the three deputates; the other is the deputy commander for operations (DCO, also known as DO). (21:--; 22:--)

The USAFE test proved successful and was adopted Air Force-wide in 1975. (21:--) However, when HQ SAC restructured its wings to comply with the new tri-deputate system, the DCM maintained responsibility for the logistics plans division. Then in 1980, five years after the Air Force-wide implementation, HQ SAC transferred the LGX division from the DCM to the DCR.

Not long after LGX was transferred in SAC, some SAC logistics plans personnel began to question the realignment. Although almost no one argued for a return to the pre-1980 structure, logistics plans personnel debated the issue of yet another functional realignment, one that would move LGX from DCR supervision to wing commander (CC) supervision.

The purpose of this study is to research the long-standing issue of where in SAC wings LGX divisions are best placed functionally. This study will therefore provide an analysis as well as recommendations to assist HQ SAC/LGX and LGLM personnel in future discussions concerning the functional alignment of SAC wing logistics plans divisions.

ASSUMPTION AND LIMITATION

Although the key responsibilities of SAC wing LGX divisions are covered in Chapter Two of this study, none of the responsibilities will be explained in detail. The author assumes the reader who is interested in this topic has a good working knowledge of logistics plans.

The author recognizes there are other possible functional alignments concerning wing logistics plans divisions; however, these alternatives will not be covered in this analysis. The sponsor's question is very specific and therefore limits the author from conducting a thorough analysis of additional functional alignment options.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The first objective of this study is to define the current functional alignment and responsibilities of a SAC wing logistics plans division. This objective is covered in Chapter Two using a SAC air refueling/bombardment wing as an example.

The second objective is to determine advantages and disadvantages of functionally realigning SAC's wing logistics plans divisions under wing commanders. Chapters Three and Four cover this objective by addressing the results of the analysis contained in Chapter Two and by addressing span of control, communications flow, chain of command, and career progression issues.

Chapter Two

LOGISTICS PLANS TODAY

"The understanding of the purpose and responsibilities of logistics plans ... is essential to an effective readiness capability." (12:3)

This chapter provides a review of the functional alignment of SAC wing LGX divisions, the major functional tasks LGX personnel are required to perform, and the pros and cons of the current functional alignment. Because of the assumption listed in Chapter One, Sections One and Two of this chapter will be relatively brief. Readers who desire additional or detailed information concerning wing-level LGX functional responsibilities should read Air Force Regulation (AFR) 400-25, Logistics Plans Management, Chapter 4.

Before beginning the actual review of "where" and "what" is a SAC wing LGX division, the following synopsis is offered:

> The logistics plans management function is a complex process. This complexity of logistics plans has grown allowing mission responsibilities to be carried out in a changing logistics environment.
>
> Logistics planning is the determination of the logistics posture to be set up for the most cost-effective support of a weapon and support system program on the basis of prescribed mission objectives .... The quality ... of logistics support ... [is] directly tied to the availability of resources and ... [is] dependent upon the way those resources are managed .... logistics doctrine is a set of rules for finding out the needs for the acquisition, distribution, and maintenance of the resources and services integral to a military capability.
>
> .....
>
> [But most importantly,] The logistics plans function is the core of planning and supporting capabilities affecting more than one of the functional logistics tasks. (12:3)

FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT

The wing logistics plans division reports to the wing deputy commander for resource management (DCR) who is "Responsible for insuring the proper planning and programming for, and the effective management and operation of, supply, comptroller, contracting, transportation, and logistic[s] plans." (13:12-14) The DCR in turn reports to the wing commander (CC) as depicted in Figure 2-1. (12:11; 13:7-2, 12-14)

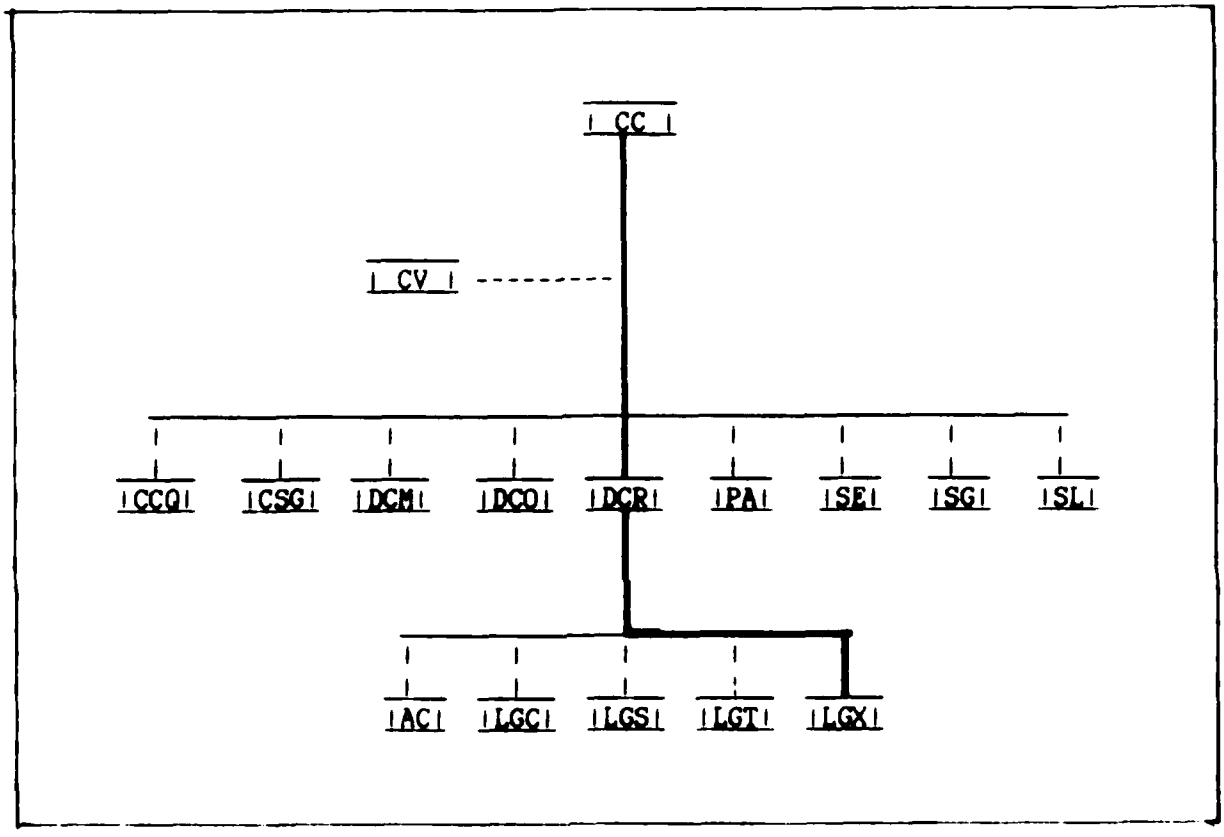

Figure 2-1. Current Functional Alignment of a Logistics Plans (LGX) Division in a SAC Air Refueling/Bombardment Wing

The order of functions shown in Figure 2-1 is strictly alphabetical -- the author is not implying an order of importance. Additionally, a SAC air refueling/bombardment wing was chosen as the example due to the author's background (see page iv).

It is important to point out the LGX division is functionally aligned on an even par with at least two other wing plans divisions. The first is operations plans (DOX) which reports to the DCO and "Develops and documents

operational and contingency plans to meet tactical and support mission objectives." (13:12-8 - 12-9) The second is programs and mobility (MAL) which reports to the DCM and "Provides ... programs and managerial support to the maintenance complex." (13:12-6 - 12-7) Due to the assumption mentioned in Chapter One, DOX functional responsibilities are not included in this study; MAL functional responsibilities are included in the next section but they are not explained in detail. The reason for including the responsibilities of MAL and not DOX is because prior to the tri-deputate structure, MAL was part of LGX. The existence and functional alignment of DOX and MAL are mentioned simply to remind the reader that LGX is not the only wing plans division functionally aligned two levels below the wing commander.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

There are basically four functional responsibilities wing LGX divisions must accomplish. These are: (1) administration, (2) plans, (3) programs, and (4) mobility. (12:11) HQ SAC transferred these LGX functions from the wing DCM to the wing DCR in 1980 (see Chapter One). However, HQ SAC did not transfer all facets of these responsibilities, nor did they transfer all the logistics plans personnel.

Retained by the DCM were the maintenance programs and mobility (MAL) functions split out of the overall LGX functions. MAL is now manned by less than a handful of logistics plans noncommissioned officers (NCOs) who are charged with providing maintenance programs and managerial support for the DCM. Additionally, MAL is the DCM single point of contact concerning maintenance inputs to various base plans. Lastly, MAL is the DCM office of primary responsibility for financial matters, staffing, and facilities management. (12:13)

Since this project is concerned with where the LGX division should be functionally aligned, it's time to discuss the LGX major responsibilities.

The first functional area is self-explanatory. Administration is the tying together of the various types of paperwork, reports, files, etc., required to keep the division running smoothly. (12:11) It's a big job.

The second function, plans, is more diverse. Included here are the preparation of logistics annexes to operating plans, operating orders, exercise plans, etc. Also, monitoring logistics aspects of limiting factors and conducting the logistics portions of airfield and site surveys are accomplished by the planners. Most importantly, the logistics planners ensure the " ... proper interface of wartime logistics plans, procedures, support systems, and guidance occurs between the various elements of the combat units, associated support units, and applicable tenant units of the wing." (12:12)

Although the second function is diverse, the third function, programs, is not only diverse, it is complex. The biggest task for this section is to administer and coordinate the host-tenant support agreement (HTSA) program

which is an on-going process. The HTSA program can include basic but detailed support agreements, letters of agreement, and memorandums of understanding. These negotiation actions are not necessarily limited to Air Force units. The programmers are also tasked with monitoring the logistics plans manning posture for adequacy of authorized and assigned personnel as well as processing required manpower change requests. Additionally, these individuals keep an eye on the availability of logistics plans personnel as well as other personnel who affect combat readiness. (12:12)

Another big task the programmers are responsible for is the wing war reserve materiel (WRM) program. This includes training, surveillance visits, review boards, wartime tasking, budgeting, applying the War Consumables Distribution Objective, and prepositioning assets to ensure the wing is prepared to fight in war. (12:12)

In a nutshell, the logistics programmers provide " ... liaison and staff assistance to base staff activities on logistics planning and programming initiatives, war readiness issues, and associated support capabilities." (12:12)

The last function to be addressed is mobility. Personnel assigned to this section of LGX are responsible for the base mobility plan, deployments, training, the Mobility Control Center, the Contingency Operation Mobility Planning and Execution System, mobility exercises, and assisting the DCR when the wing contingency support staff is in session. (12:12-13) These major responsibilities are also never-ending. LGX personnel almost always seem to be simultaneously planning, conducting, and evaluating mobility operations which result in numerous changes to improve the base mobility plan.

Because of the broad nature of the mobility responsibilities, an LGX officer is appointed, by the wing commander, to serve as the installation mobility officer (IMO). It is actually the IMO who is responsible for the tasks outlined above and it is here that a true dichotomy exists. According to AFR 400-25, Logistics Plans Management (1984), LGX works for the DCR, but according to AFR 28-4, USAF Mobility Planning (1978), the IMO works for the wing commander. (8:2-8,3-5; 12:11; 13:12-14) This issue will be explored in detail in the next section as well as in subsequent chapters because the author believes it is the crux of the long-standing debate this research project is addressing.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES OF CURRENT FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT

The current SAC wing LGX functional alignment can be viewed as having both benefits and detriments. This section will briefly discuss these areas; the detailed analysis is contained in Chapter Four.

On the positive side, LGX is a logistics function and is therefore placed under the DCR to consolidate wing logistics functions (with the exception of munitions and aircraft maintenance who work directly for the DCM).

(9:A17-35/36 - A17-37,A17-39; 13:7-2, 12-14) One could argue this arrangement eases the coordination process since the logistics functions work either for the same supervisor or on an even par with the other wing logisticians as depicted in Figure 2-1. One could also argue this structure provides the inherent career path all logisticians need in order to grow in their profession.

The current functional alignment complies with the US Air Force approved organizational structure. (12:11) This means the LGX officers and NCOs can easily transition from major command (MAJCOM) to major command on a permanent change of station move. Although the particular LGX responsibilities will differ slightly based on each MAJCOM's mission, the fact that the functional alignment remains constant provides a solid basis and therefore a sense of consistency in a " ... changing logistics environment." (12:3)

On the negative side, LGX faces a perceived dichotomy as explained in the preceding section. This problem comes into focus when one compares: the LGX mobility function "Monitors the entire mobility program ... [and makes] sure that the DCR ... is aware of mobility and deployment deficiencies, changes in deployment tasking, and limiting factors affecting mobility, and [also] suggests ways for key staff personnel to resolve problems ... " (12:13) with: the IMO's responsibilities include "Acting for the commander in the overall direction, control, and coordination of deployments from the base." (8:2-8) How does an IMO (who is an LGX officer) effectively work for two bosses?

To what degree do the above factors affect the mission accomplishment of logistics planners? What other factors are relevant? Are any of these factors significant enough to justify retaining the current functional alignment, or is a realignment warranted? These questions will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four and answered in Chapter Five.

Before moving to Chapters Four and Five, the author presents a proposed logistics plans division functionally realigned directly under the wing commander. The proposal is contained in Chapter Three.

"NO PRINT"

Chapter Three

LOGISTICS PLANS REALIGNED

"Nothing that is has to be because it was." (18:--)

FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT

With the above quote in mind, it's time to look at how LGX could be realigned to work directly for the wing commander. The best way to show this proposed realignment is to compare Figure 2-1 (page 4) with Figure 3-1 below.

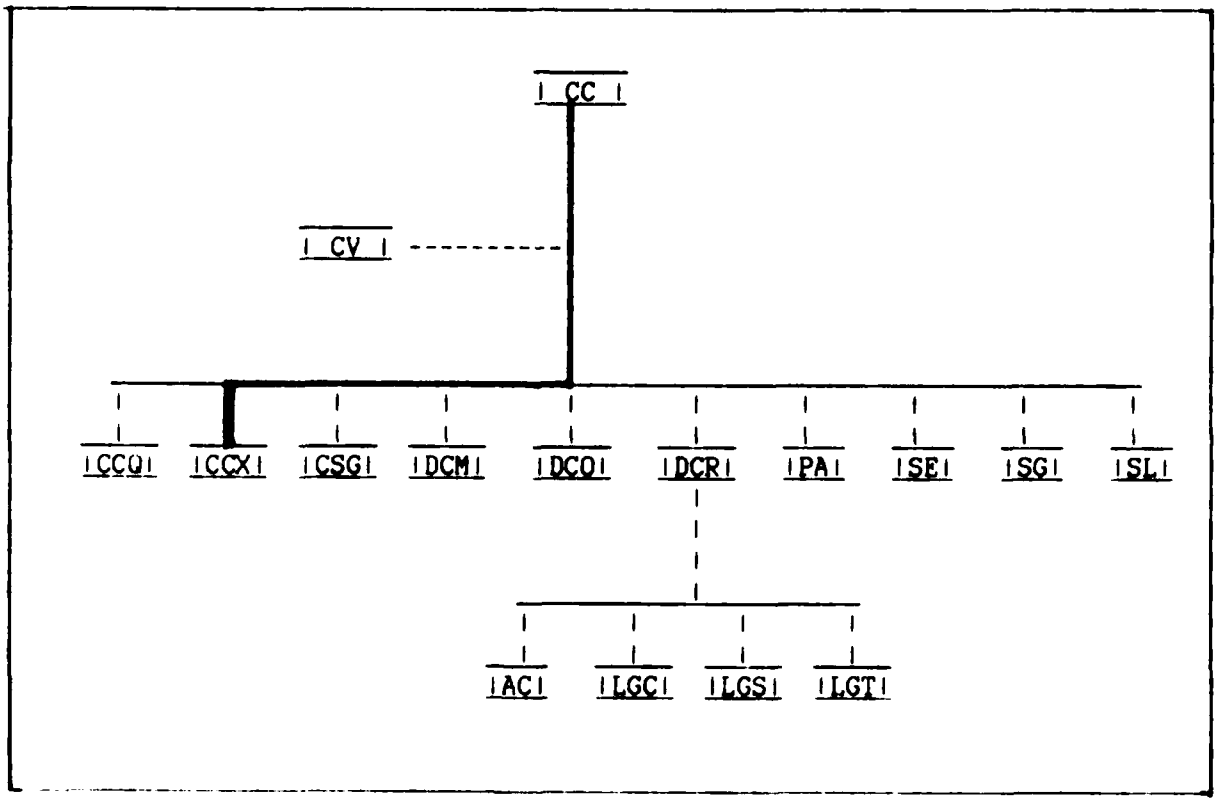

Figure 3-1. Proposed Functional Realignment of a Logistics Plans (CCX) Division in a SAC Air Refueling/Bombardment Wing.

The order of functions shown in Figure 3-1 is again strictly alphabetical -- the author is not implying an order of importance. A SAC air refueling/bombardment wing was again chosen as the example due to the author's background (see page iv).

A few points need to be made concerning the proposed realignment. First, the office symbol for the logistics plans division changes from LGX to CCX because the division now works directly for the wing commander rather than directly for the DCR. Second, CCX is now one functional level above their wing plans counterparts -- DOX still reports to the DCO and MAL still reports to the DCM. However, the division's name (logistics plans) does not change. Throughout the remainder of this paper, LGX refers to the functional alignment depicted in Figure 2-1 and CCX refers to the proposed functional realignment depicted in Figure 3-1.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

What happens to the major responsibilities (administration, plans, programs, and mobility) when LGX becomes CCX? Are any aspects of these responsibilities added or deleted or are new responsibilities added? This section reviews these issues.

The first area (administration), would not change. Paperwork is paperwork; it needs to be typed, filed, and taken care of regardless of where the logistics plans division is functionally aligned.

Likewise the second and third areas (plans and programs), wouldn't change. Plans and annexes, airfield and site surveys, and a WRM program would still be required for effective combat readiness. When the programmer negotiates an agreement, he/she already speaks for the wing commander as the wing representative, regardless of whom the division chief reports to. However, it is possible to strengthen the programmer's position with a functional realignment.

Although the fourth area (mobility), also would not change, the dichotomy explained in Chapter Two would be resolved with a functional realignment. The older regulation (AFR 28-4) would prevail and the DCR would be cut from the organizational chain giving the CCX division chief the same straight line to the wing commander as the IMO has.

Basically, the author does not believe any aspects of the four major areas of responsibility would be altered. Neither does the author believe new responsibilities of a major scope would be added. It's quite possible the division could be affected by the addition of minor responsibilities; however, these additions would probably be offset by the deletion of current minor responsibilities. For example, instead of preparing, developing, and conducting " ... special logistics projects as directed by the DCR ... ", (12:11) CCX personnel would work special projects at the direction and discretion of the wing commander. There's no real change in this philosophy since the logistics plans division chief is merely responding to taskings from his/her boss.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES OF PROPOSED FUNCTIONAL REALIGNMENT

The proposed functional realignment has both pros and cons associated with it. This section provides a look at both sides of the argument. Like the advantages and disadvantages of the current functional alignment, the detailed analysis of this discussion is contained in Chapter Four.

On the positive side, CCX personnel no longer face a dichotomy of attempting to follow the orders of two bosses. The division reports solely to the wing commander as discussed in the preceding section.

Another benefit gained by the proposed realignment concerns the management of the wing war reserve materiel (WRM) program. As a career logistician pointed out to the author, the effective management of a sound WRM program is the key to a viable logistics war support program. WRM is a wing-wide program, i.e., it "belongs" to the wing commander because it affects the combat capability of his/her entire wing. (18:--) The author does not agree that WRM alone is the key to a viable logistics war support program. However, the point is well made that by elevating the position of the logistics plans division, the many issues conducted and monitored by these personnel may be viewed by other wing personnel as having increased importance. There will be no doubt CCX personnel have the ear of, and speak for, the wing commander.

But the proposed functional realignment is not without its drawbacks. By placing CCX directly under the wing commander's control, SAC units fail to comply with the US Air Force approved organizational structure. (12:11) And, the logistics plans officers and NCOs will face "culture shock" when they transfer into and out of SAC from other major commands which do comply with the US Air Force approved structure. While the author is not opposed to changing regulations which are passé or ineffective, the author does believe a major realignment of this nature, if it proves to be more effective than the current alignment, should not be limited to one major command. But the proof must be conclusive beyond a shadow of a doubt before a complete US Air Force restructuring occurs.

Additionally, since LGX has been pulled from the DCR's control, renamed CCX, and placed on the same organizational level as both the DCR and the DCM, an obvious question arises. To whom do the logistics planners look for career counseling and career growth?

This question and those posed at the end of Chapter Two will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Everything will fall into place in the final chapter when the author provides the answers to these questions as well as the answer to the sponsor's question.

"NO PRINT"

Chapter Four

ISSUES AFFECTING REALIGNMENT

This chapter reviews the many questions raised in previous chapters of this study by focusing the discussion on four issues. These issues are: span of control, communications flow, chain of command, and career progression.

SPAN OF CONTROL

The purpose of this section is to look at how a wing commander's effectiveness may be linked to the number of subordinates who report directly to him/her (span of control). (6:16; 17:1) Also to be considered is the possibility his/her subordinates' effectiveness may be linked to the number of people who report directly to him/her. This second aspect is covered in the next section. This issue boils down to one question: Is there an expected breaking point of effectiveness (especially for a wing commander) based on span of control?

Although the terms "span of control," "span of supervision," "span of management," and "span of leadership" are used interchangeably, (1:89; 17:1) the author will use the term "span of control" for standardization reasons. In management circles, "span of control" is a principle (1:89) rather than a term. It is interesting to note that several books on management theory contain the same basic question raised by this author -- Is there an expected breaking point of effectiveness based on span of control? (1:89; 2:74; 4:273) Other documents discuss the issue of span of control and its relation to organizational effectiveness (7:49; 15:2-4) without asking the basic question. And two other documents concern themselves solely with the issue of span of control (and factors affecting it); one limits its discussion to the senior echelon of the Department of Defense and the other limits its discussion to one US Air Force aircraft maintenance career field. (16:--; 17:--)

There are certainly many more books and documents available which contain insight into the basic question and indeed the author considered several of them. However, the sources selected for this study provide good discussion as well as a manageable number of references keeping in mind this issue is only one of four to be discussed in this chapter.

A basic and " ... safe assumption, and one supported by the literature, [is] that supervision and supervisory factors play an important role in the effectiveness of an organization." (15:4) Perhaps, then, there's a magic

number of subordinates one supervisor (e.g., a wing commander) can effectively manage to ensure his/her organization achieves its goals. If so, it's a simple matter to count the number of people reporting directly to a SAC wing commander to determine if one more subordinate (the logistics plans division) can be accommodated. Unfortunately, such is not the case.

Many of the references support the theory that less is best, i.e., the fewer the number of people who directly report to any one individual (e.g., a wing commander), the more effective that one individual will be. In fact, these references indicate the number is approximately six subordinates. This belief is based on Biblical, ancient Greek, Egyptian, British military, and mathematical studies. (1:89,92; 2:74; 16:4-5; 17:1,3,8-9,15)

But the American Management Association no longer supports a limit of six subordinates per supervisor. In fact, its studies indicate that of " ... the presidents of 100 large companies ... having sound organizational practices ... [the] median [number of employees directly supervised was] ... 8 to 9." (1:92-93) Other sources indicate the number of subordinates one supervisor can effectively manage could be as high as 12, 13 to 16, 18 to 22, or even " ... 30 or more employees, provided they are engaged in only a few simple, related activities." (2:74; 4:274; 16:9; 17:27-28)

It's clear there is truly no consensus on a magic number, so this issue alone is not the deciding factor for or against functionally realigning SAC's wing logistics plans divisions. However, one should keep in mind that span of control is closely tied to departmentation, " ... groupings of both people and tasks in accordance with executive decisions concerning the logical divisions of work to be done.... The purposes of departmentation are to ... [1] Specialize activities ... [2] Simplify managerial tasks ... [and 3] Maintain control by grouping employees within well-defined areas[.]" (1:93)

" ... [General of the Air Force Henry H.] Arnold made it clear that a commander should not attempt to make all of the decisions. It would be overwhelming." (5:272) Thus it is clear a wing commander needs subordinates to whom he/she can delegate to ensure the wing runs smoothly and efficiently. It appears from Figure 2-1 that today's SAC air refueling/bombardment wings are structured according to departmentation, i.e., subordinates' work is divided into logical areas. Therefore, if a functional realignment of logistics plans divisions from DCR to CC supervision does occur, the logical pattern is broken. This results in an argument against the functional realignment contained in Chapter Three since the capabilities of SAC wing logistics plans divisions would not be enhanced.

COMMUNICATIONS FLOW

This section provides general guidelines on two-way communications (what, when, how often) and examines the effectiveness of a subordinate (LGX/CCX) based on availability of and access to his/her supervisor for information, assistance in problem solving, etc.

"Keeping your people informed is just half of your communications job. The other half: making sure your boss knows the score." (3:165) Although no clearer description of two-way communications can be given, its effectiveness can be dependent on span of control. A theory exists which links efficient communications to a small span of control. " ... one of the principle reasons 'traditionally thought to argue for a small span of control is the need of the chief to communicate with his [/her] principal subordinates.'" (17:17) Additionally, this theory points out " ...'these communication needs are two-way, for the chief needs not only to communicate his wishes to his staff, but also to receive information from below.'" (17:17) That's the "what" of two-way communications.

The downward portion is relatively easy to accomplish -- the logistics plans division chief is responsible for informing his/her subordinates of the facts, policies, etc., they need to know in order to accomplish the various tasks assigned to them. Some of these facts and policies flow downward to the division chief who filters the information before passing it on. One school of management would use this fact as a reason for realigning the wing logistics plans division. Its theory states a broader span of control is more effective because the " ... manager [wing commander] ... is closer to the scene of action ... thus [minimizing] ... delays and distortions involved in going through long chains." (17:31-32) But as shown in Figure 2-1, LGX is only two levels below the wing commander -- hardly qualifying as the end of a long organizational chain. This same theory also states that unless " ... management governs by edict ... [communications] channels must be broad enough to permit [an] easy flow and the number of relay points (supervisory levels) should be kept at a minimum." (17:32) True, but the logical groupings obtained by departmentation should result in an easy flow of communications. There's no doubt the downward side of two-way communications is easy, but how one accomplishes the upward portion of two-way communications deserves more discussion.

"No organization is any more effective than its communications system, and communications is very much like water. It won't go uphill unless you use a pump. That pump is attitude." (3:165) Inherent in any supervisor's position is the responsibility to be prompt, accurate, and complete when informing the boss on office matters that need his/her attention. This requires tact as well as good judgment. "You need not barge into the boss's office every time the slightest difficulty occurs, or keep him [/her] up-to-date on trivialities or office gossip." (3:165,167) For a military perspective, one needs only to consider the words of the US Air Force's first Chief of Staff, General of the Air Force Henry H. Arnold, who " ... once commented on the role of the staff officer as being one in which the staff officer must 'Keep the commander informed of the state of his [/her] command at all times, and yet he [/she] must avoid passing up to the commander petty decisions and a mess of infinitesimal detail.'" (5:272) Indeed, executives with small spans of control " ... are thought to be not only more efficient, but happier because they are generally freed from the annoyance of details." (17:15-16)

In order for any subordinate (e.g., LGX or CCX) to engage in upward communications, he/she must have access to the boss (e.g., DCR or wing commander, respectively). This factor can be dependent on such things as the boss' personality, working relationship, how the boss handles his/her job, "... the latitude he [/she] gives you in reporting to him [/her] ... ", (3:166), as well as his/her availability. However, the subordinate must adapt to the preferences of his/her boss when pushing communications upward. (3:167)

Given the wing structure shown in Figure 2-1, if the LGX division chief needs assistance to solve a problem, e.g., lack of cooperation from other wing agencies, he/she has the option of elevating the issue to the DCR (a colonel and usually two or three ranks higher than the LGX division chief). This provides an opportunity to involve a senior officer, with his/her perspective, without going to "everybody's boss" (the wing commander). If the DCR is not totally successful, the issue may be elevated again to ensure other wing agencies understand the significance of the LGX position. From the author's personal experience, whenever the need for DCR assistance was requested it was always received, but the need to get the wing commander involved rarely occurred. As a retired SAC wing DCR stated, " ... if LGX were directly under the Wg Co [wing commander], the LGX [division] chief might have to fight [his/] her own battles, perhaps against some pretty big guns (MA, RM, DO [DCM, DCR, DCO], etc)." (20:1) It is doubtful a functional realignment would cause an increase in the logistics plans division chief's authorized rank; therefore, although CCX would be on an even par with the big guns, the CCX division chief would still be very junior to them. In essence, CCX loses the opportunity to benefit from the DCR's senior clout and will be forced to rely solely on the wing commander, perhaps prematurely, for added clout.

Common sense indicates a supervisor with fewer subordinates has more time to meet and discuss issues and problems with those subordinates. Two schools of management agree " ... a manager with many subordinates has less time, on the average, to spend with each of them." (17:31) Likewise, a supervisor whose responsibility is limited to a logical grouping of tasks will also have more time, as well as an inherent technical concern, to meet and discuss issues and problems with his/her subordinates. Thus it follows that a person who works for a supervisor with fewer subordinates will be more effective since he/she will be able to talk with the boss when necessary for information gathering/giving and basic problem solving. "... communication and interaction between supervisors and relevant others are important .... Supervisors [e.g., LGX/CCX] who interact more with their bosses and workers have a better understanding of their expectations." (14:viii,17)

With these thoughts in mind, when the reader compares Figure 2-1 with Figure 3-1, it becomes apparent that as far as communications flow is concerned the capabilities of the wing logistics plans division will not be enhanced with a functional realignment.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

A key question posed in Chapter Two revolved around the present dichotomy of the IMO working for two bosses (the DCR on a daily basis and the wing commander during mobility operations). "'No man can serve two masters.' Each employee in the organization should receive orders from, and report to, only one supervisor." (6:49) Using this philosophy, one possible solution to the dichotomy was presented in Chapter Three -- functionally realign the logistics plans division directly under the wing commander and bypass the DCR even on a daily basis. But that's just one side of the coin. This section considers the other side by discussing the possibility of minimizing the dichotomy to a "paper" problem only.

Other agencies throughout the wing face this same dichotomy of apparently working for two bosses. For example, the people in disaster preparedness as well as the disaster control office work for one senior member of the wing during normal day-to-day operations, then work for the wing commander during a contingency or crisis situation. (21:--) This shift in bosses occurs when the wing shifts gears to either generate for a deployment or work out of a crisis. But even during these operations, these personnel still need the help and cooperation of their peacetime boss as well as their boss' other subordinates. These senior officers (the peacetime bosses) have the technical knowledge to guide their subordinates as they advise the contingency boss (the wing commander) and his staff on the proper course of action.

From the author's personal experience, it would be a mistake for the IMO to completely skip the DCR. It doesn't take long to keep the DCR in the loop. The professional attitude displayed by the IMO who is smart enough to work through, not over or around, the DCR will be appreciated by the DCR. (21:--) This isn't to say the IMO is prohibited from making decisions, nor does it prohibit the IMO from saying anything without the DCR's approval. This philosophy was used by the author from 1980 to 1983. The result: not only was the author's wing the first active duty Air Force unit in Eighth Air Force to achieve an excellent rating on each mobility team exercised by the SAC Inspector General (IG), but the author's wing repeated the unprecedented string of excellent ratings during the next SAC IG inspection. Attitude was the key.

Virtually everyone knew the wing commander was very interested in the mobility program and virtually everyone also knew the IMO was responsible for the program. But this didn't happen magically or overnight. It was a full team effort with the wing commander relying on his DCR to help the IMO make the program work. It was the wing commander's trust in his logisticians and the rest of his staff, the DCR's support, and the IMO's initiative and enthusiasm that paid off handsomely for everyone in the wing. If the DCR had been cut from this chain, the author doubts the results would have been the same. Thus, the direct "IMO to wing commander" chain was on paper only, since the IMO actually continued to work through the DCR.

There are other examples of military organizations being " ... direct representatives in certain instances, but ... [falling] under someone else for supervision on a daily basis. [Perhaps the] ... best example is the Service Chiefs of Staff. They fall under the President as part of the JCS [Joint Chiefs of Staff] during a crisis, but they fall under the respective Service Secretaries during peacetime." (21:--; 22:--)

One other example that " ... works well but has to be understood is funding at [the] base level." (21:--) Like the war reserve materiel (WRM) program (discussed on page 11), the dollars associated with base-level funding "belong" to the wing commander, not the DCR or the combat support group commander, (21:--) even though the comptroller, who manages the program, works for the DCR. Base-level funding, like WRM, could be used as an argument against subordinating the responsible agency, i.e., working at a level other than directly for the wing commander since the programs "belong" to him/her. (21:--)

However, not everyone can work directly for the wing commander. Therefore, the concept of departmentation once again comes into play. If the wing is structured logically, then regardless of situations calling for someone to change bosses when the wing transitions out of normal day-to-day operations, the wing will continue to be successful if the normal chain of command is not bypassed. This takes a good all-around effort with clear understanding by the principal players. As the author pointed out, it is possible to have a viable wing mobility program despite the dichotomy created by the conflict between AFR 28-4 and AFR 400-25. Therefore, as far as mobility is concerned, the capabilities of the wing logistics plans division can be enhanced by solid teamwork, but not necessarily by functionally realigning the division.

CAREER PROGRESSION

This section discusses the fourth issue affecting the functional alignment of the wing logistics plans division. Specifically, this section covers three areas: when should officers and NCOs enter the career field, to whom do logistics plans officers look for career advice and growth, and to what positions can logistics plans officers aspire.

Two regulations clearly state the lowest officer rank authorized in the logistics plans and programs career field (66XX) is captain. (9:A17-40; 10:150) Although no minimum enlisted rank is specified, an enlisted individual who wants to cross-train into the logistics plans area (661X0) must possess a 5-skill level in one of only 13 specified career fields. (11:A39-2) Put bluntly, "The Logistics Plans and Programs career field is considered a non-accession career field for both officer and enlisted personnel." (12:13)

Since an Air Force member is basically denied entry into this career field immediately upon entry onto active duty, what type of background does an individual need before cross-training into the 66XX/661X0 area? Because the officer "Integrates supply, maintenance, transportation, and contracting

activities into plans and programs ... " (9:A17-37,A17-39), it makes sense that an officer entering the 66XX career field " ... should have prior experience in at least one of the areas in ... Systems and Logistics .... " (10:150) Enlisted personnel need the same type of foundation in either a related logistics field or in one which involves " ... performing or supervising functions such as developing, evaluating, monitoring, and inspecting logistics activities, including logistics plans and documents or specialized programming functions." (11:A39-7)

It's obvious from the above that logistics plans officers and NCOs are fully qualified logisticians even before they cross-train into the career field. Given this solid foundation, one can assume a logistics planner is apt to be in one of several logistics disciplines throughout his/her career. The logistics plans officer, like any other officer, will look to his/her boss for career counseling. With the current functional alignment depicted in Figure 2-1, LGX seeks and receives advice from the DCR. This is logical not only from the viewpoint that the DCR is a senior logistician, but also from the viewpoint that the LGX officer can aspire to be a DCR. This logical progression is listed as an approved (and anticipated) development phase for logistics plans officers. (10:150,152)

This means an LGX officer can logically progress from the 66XX career field to the DCR's 0096 career field. However, there is no logical career progression from CCX to a wing commander's position (21:--) as depicted in Figure 3-1. Therefore, CCX personnel " ... can't look to the wing commander or vice wing commander [CV] for career guidance because they [CC and CV] don't have the background in logistics." (21:--) Where does that leave CCX personnel when they need career counseling? They " ... may have to go to the DCR or DCM [based on the CCX officer's background] anyway." (21:--) The risk here is the DCR and DCM are at a disadvantage because they will not know the CCX logistics planner as well as they would know the LGX logistics planner. This could dilute the overall effectiveness of the career counseling sessions.

Although there would be no effect on the logistician's initial entry into the 66XX career field if the division was functionally realigned according to Figure 3-1, there would be an effect on the logistics planner's future. That effect would be negative -- CCX gives up critical opportunities for valuable career guidance, which may disrupt his/her growth, by working for a " ... boss [who] doesn't have the logistics background ... " (21:--) the logistics planner looks for in his/her boss. In the long run it is doubtful the capabilities of SAC's wing logistics plans divisions would be enhanced by a functional realignment that removes the officers from their logical career progression.

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Chapter Five

SUMMARY

Would capabilities of wing-level logistics plans (LGX) divisions in the Strategic Air Command be enhanced if the LGX divisions were functionally realigned under wing commanders? (23:6)

This question was posed at the beginning of Chapter One and was the underlying theme of all subsequent chapters of this study. To answer this question, the author first presented the logistics plans division, its major responsibilities, and the pros and cons as it is functionally aligned today. This was followed by a look at a proposed functional realignment elevating LGX one level and placing it directly under the wing commander's supervision. The author then asserted there are four issues which affect a division's functional alignment. These issues (span of control, communications flow, chain of command, and career progression), were discussed in Chapter Four.

This chapter reviews the findings of Chapters Two, Three, and Four, and then draws conclusions based on the research and analysis presented in this paper, to answer the sponsor's question. Finally, the author provides two appropriate recommendations.

FINDINGS

A SAC wing-level logistics plans division is placed under the supervision of the wing deputy commander for resource management (an Air Force-wide approved alignment), who is also responsible for several other wing logistics functions. This type of structure (a logical grouping of tasks) is known as departmentation (1:93) and is closely tied to the principle of span of control.

An LGX division is primarily charged with four major tasks (administration, plans, programs, and mobility). Communications flow and chain of command work well with the first three tasks due to departmentation; however, a dichotomy is associated with the last task. A regulation written a few years after LGX divisions were approved Air Force-wide placed the installation mobility officer under the wing commander. This particular regulation (AFR 28-4) conflicts with later guidance (AFR 400-25) (8:2-8,3-5; 12:11) and creates a perception problem.

One way to eliminate the dichotomy and the perception problem is to functionally realign the wing logistics plans division directly under the wing commander. As presented in Chapter Three, the four major tasks of CCX (the functionally realigned logistics plans division) would match those of LGX. The only significant difference would be the CCX division chief's boss.

CONCLUSIONS

The only significant difference between the LGX and CCX divisions is the person to whom the division chief reports. The significance of this difference can be determined by examining four issues and the effect each issue has on the functional alignment of the logistics plans division. This section provides a synopsis of these issues to determine if the capabilities of SAC wing logistics plans divisions would be enhanced by a functional realignment.

Span of control. There is no magic number of subordinates one individual can effectively manage. While many references indicate a limit of six subordinates is realistic, (1:89,92; 2:74; 16:4-5; 17:8) studies conducted by the American Management Association and many others argue the number of subordinates one individual can effectively manage could be as high as 30. (2:74; 4:274; 16:9; 17:27-28) The author concluded a functional realignment of the wing logistics plans division from DCR to wing commander supervision would not impact the wing commander's span of control. However, the principle of departmentation would be violated, adversely impacting the capabilities of the wing logistics plans division.

Communications flow. Communications is a two-way street. No supervisor can possibly be effective if he/she doesn't listen to subordinates. (17:17) Most people would agree that personnel at the lowest part of an organization are likely to be less productive than personnel higher in the organization. They are at the tail end of the child's game "Whisper Down the Valley," because what they hear may not resemble what was said at the beginning. But, one must remember LGX is not close to the tail end of the wing organization since LGX is only two levels below the wing commander. For any subordinate to engage in upward communications, he/she must have access to the boss whenever needed. Since the DCR has fewer subordinates making demands on his time than does the wing commander, one can assume LGX will find it easier than CCX to meet with the boss. For these reasons, the author concluded a functional realignment will not enhance the logistics plans division's capabilities.

Chain of command. A person should have only one supervisor. (6:49) The installation mobility officer (IMO) faces a dichotomy since he/she is an LGX officer but is appointed as the IMO by the wing commander. This dichotomy is perpetuated by a conflict between AFR 28-4 and AFR 400-25. (8:2-8,3-5; 12:11) The author presented several examples of other agencies that face a similar dichotomy. The author also provided a personal example which shows it is possible to relegate the dichotomy to a "paper" problem by simply continuing to work with and through, rather than around, the DCR. Mobility is an important function of a wing. If the senior logistician is cut from the chain

of command by a functional realignment of the logistics plans division, the author concluded the division s capabilities would be weakened rather than enhanced.

Career progression. The author agreed with the requirement that an individual should be a fully qualified logistician before entering the 66XX/661X0 career field. Although there are rare exceptions to this rule, it makes sense to enforce it. The logistics plans division is virtually at the center of the logistics world, interfacing with other logistics functions as well as representing logistics to other agencies on base. The logistics plans officer will look to his/her boss for guidance and career counseling, and may even aspire to one day serve as a DCR. Therefore, the DCR is in the best position to advise an LGX officer on his/her career. Since there is no logical career progression from logistics plans to wing commander, and since the typical wing commander lacks a logistics background, (21:--) the author concluded the capabilities of a wing logistics plans division would not be enhanced by a functional realignment.

Based on the analysis presented in this study, the author concludes the answer to the sponsor's question (23:6) is: No, capabilities of SAC's wing logistics plans divisions would not be enhanced if the divisions were functionally realigned under the wing commanders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The wing logistics plans division should not be functionally realigned under the wing commander. This division should continue to work for the DCR and therefore remain on the same functional level as other logistics agencies and other wing-level plans divisions.

The perceived dichotomy faced by the IMO still exists, and some may find it difficult to deal with. Therefore, the author recommends Air Force Regulation 28-4 be updated to include the DCR in the IMO's chain. This does not affect the appointment of the IMO by the wing commander, " ... nor the responsibility of the IMO to act for the wing commander during contingency operations ... ", (22:--) but it will ease the wing commander's burden during these operations because he/she will be able to rely on the DCR to help the IMO. Implementing this recommendation will also end the conflict between AFR 28-4 and AFR 400-25.

"NO PRINT"

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